

# Lady first

Fire department hires full-time female firefighter

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**D**UXBURY — Monday Oct. 30, the Duxbury fire department joined the ranks of many surrounding communities as their first full-time female firefighter began her first shift.

When Kirsten Piper walked into her new job Monday morning she was welcomed warmly and well aware of the history she was making in Duxbury. The veteran department has been an all male crew for far too long. Without any hesitation the deputies, chief and members of the department welcomed the certified paramedic EMT to the job.

Piper, who has been an EMT for four years, worked for American Medical Response in Plymouth before making the jump to Duxbury. She became a certified paramedic a year and a half ago, and felt the next move to make was into the role of a firefighter. She also became a certified diver two years ago.

Piper joins the department as the eighth certified paramedic, reaching the goal of two paramedics per shift Fire Chief Kevin Nord wished to establish. In July, paramedic Harry Mathews joined the department as the sixth paramedic. At the end of September, newly graduated paramedic John Montosi became the seventh.

Make no mistake, she may be the first female, but she is not getting any special attention. She still is spending her first week getting acquainted with the equipment, the department and getting timed on how fast she can get dressed into her firefighting gear. Piper said she feels honored to be the first female full-time firefighter, but she is concentrating more on trying to be the best paramedic and firefighter she can be.

"I am getting to know where everything is and how everything works on the truck," Piper



Kirsten Piper, Duxbury's first full-time female firefighter, joined the department at the end of October.

said of her first few shifts. "It is a lot of work."

When she is not training, Piper enjoys spending time with her family and riding her Harley Sportster 1200. The avid motorcyclist spends much of her free time on her bike or in the gym,

Piper is also a sport enthusiast from hockey to football.

Before becoming an EMT, Piper was the activities director at Cranberry Village in Carver. She said she has always enjoyed working with seniors, and since she was a young girl has been a

helper when it came to people. She became an EMT to continue her service helping people. "Being able to be that calm face when someone is in distress or scared is the best part of my job," Piper said.

Having a women firefighter adds an interesting dynamic to the department, deputy chief William Carrico said. There are situation where a female patron is more comfortable with another female. At times the department has had to call upon the police force for a female respondent, Piper gives us the advantage of providing female care through our department he said.

"She adds good diversity to the department," Carrico said. "There was not a female full-time firefighter until now, change is a really good thing."